



**Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services**  
Helene Nelson, Department Secretary  
**Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction**  
Elizabeth Burmaster, State Superintendent



*Governor Jim Doyle*

**\*\*\*NEWS RELEASE\*\*\***

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CONTACT: Joseph Donovan, DPI Communications Officer  
(608) 266-3559 / [joseph.donovan@dpi.state.wi.us](mailto:joseph.donovan@dpi.state.wi.us)

Eva Robelia, DHFS Communications Officer  
(608) 266-1683 / [robelel@dhfs.state.wi.us](mailto:robelel@dhfs.state.wi.us)

**Wisconsin receives General Supervision Enhancement Grant**

*Federal grant to support collaboration for improved early childhood outcomes for children with disabilities*

MADISON—Wisconsin's long tradition of providing quality services to children with disabilities received additional support with a one-year federal grant that will enhance collaboration to improve outcomes for young children.

The \$746,409 General Supervision Enhancement Grant was written by the departments of Public Instruction (DPI) and Health and Family Services (DHFS) to build a comprehensive birth to 6 data system. The "Wisconsin's Data Framework: Supporting Decision Making for Improved Early Childhood Outcomes" grant proposal supports creating technological solutions to measure how programs serve children with disabilities and their families. The information will be used to improve programs, services, and outcomes for children, birth to age 6.

Wisconsin has two separate systems to serve young children with disabilities under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). DHFS and community providers deliver services for children from birth to age 3 to support cognitive development, communication skills, mobility, and socialization. From ages 3 to 21, students' education and related services are delivered through the DPI, local school districts, and other providers. Both systems have stringent policies for confidentiality of student data. This grant supports development of web-based and other technologies to gather and share information that will result in improved programs and services through data-informed decision-making.

"We are constantly looking to improve programs and increase collaboration in serving our youngest children with disabilities. This planning grant will allow us to develop tools to improve services and programs for these children," said State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster. "As we provide a free appropriate public education for children with disabilities, we strive to support students' development and learning, while preventing or reducing barriers to students' success."

(more)

“We are committed to Gov. Doyle’s *KidsFirst* agenda to help ensure children are prepared for school and ready to succeed,” said DHFS Secretary Helene Nelson. “Evaluating children’s progress as a result of our early intervention efforts through the Birth to 3 and Early Childhood programs will assist us in attaining the goal.”

The grant proposal builds on collaborative efforts by DPI and DHFS, the University of Wisconsin-Madison’s Waisman Center, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, school districts, community partner groups, and other stakeholders. Goals for the grant are to

- build consensus on the development of an accountability measurement method that allows local providers to reliably, efficiently, and consistently collect and report data on child progress and family involvement and satisfaction;
- support and improve the transition for children and families as they move between county early intervention services and school early childhood special education services;
- develop a technology solution that bridges existing data systems, provides a mechanism to collect and aggregate data, is responsive to local providers and families, and maintains high levels of confidentiality; and
- build the state and local infrastructure that includes policies, professional development, and marketing to ensure that data-based decisions result in program improvements.

“Accomplishment of these goals will result in outcome indicators for children between birth and age 6 and a web-based system to collect, analyze, and use data to improve programs and services for children with disabilities and their families,” Burmaster said.

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